

Remarks

Claims 1-70 and 72-83 are pending and at issue in the present application, claim 71 having been canceled by this amendment.

As an initial matter, applicants would like to point out that the examiner has not indicated consideration of papers entitled: "Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement" dated May 28, 2002, "Second Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement" dated June 11, 2002, and "Ninth Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement" dated September 4, 2003. Applicants respectfully request that the examiner return initialed copies of forms PTO-1449 for these papers to the undersigned.

Applicants traverse the rejections of the claims at issue as anticipated by or obvious over Pawloski et al., Tanizaki et al., Phillips, Komatsu et al., and Carson et al.

As an initial matter, the examiner objected to claims 71 and 72 as dependent upon a rejected base claim and noted that such claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Applicants have amended claim 70 to include the recitation of claim 71, and hence, claims 70-77 should now be allowable. The disclosure of Carson et al. is now moot in view of the allowability of claims 70-77, inasmuch as Carson et al. was only cited against claims 70 and 74-77.

Claim 1, and claims 2-32, 64, 66, and 78-80 dependent thereon, specify a single use processing substrate comprising a first cut resistant layer having a first surface area and including a cellulosic ply and a thermoplastic ply. The substrate further includes a second layer having a second surface area and including a cellulosic ply and a thermoplastic ply, wherein the first layer is secured to the second layer such that a portion of the second surface area is laterally disposed outside of the first surface area.

Claim 33, and claims 34-63, 65, 67-69, and 81-83 dependent thereon, recite a single use processing substrate comprising a first cut resistant layer having a first surface area and a ply of tissue disposed below a ply of thermoplastic material. The substrate further includes an unfolded second layer having a second surface area and a ply of tissue disposed above a ply of thermoplastic material, wherein the first layer is secured to and substantially centered on the second layer in at least one dimension such that a portion of the second surface area is laterally disposed outside of the first surface area.

Claim 70, and claims 71-77 dependent thereon, specify a processing substrate including a cut resistant portion having a first surface area and an absorbent portion disposed adjacent the cut resistant portion and having a second surface area. The substrate further includes a barrier portion disposed adjacent the absorbent portion, wherein the cut resistant portion, the absorbent portion, and the barrier portion are secured to one another such that a section of the second surface area is laterally disposed outside of the first surface area. Further, the cut resistant portion includes a plurality of apertures therein.

None of the cited references, alone or in combination, discloses or suggests a processing substrate including first and second layers wherein the second layer has a cellulosic ply and a portion of the surface area of the second layer is laterally disposed outside of the surface area of the first layer, as recited by claims 1-69, and 78-83.

Additionally, none of the cited references, alone or in combination, discloses or suggests a processing substrate having a cut resistant portion, an absorbent portion, and a barrier portion, wherein a section of a surface area of the absorbent portion is laterally disposed outside of a surface area of the cut resistant portion and wherein the cut resistant portion includes a plurality of apertures therein, as recited by claims 70-77.

In fact, Pawloski specifically discloses in FIGS. 8 and 9 an absorbent insert for food packages including a cooking surface disposed atop at least one layer of tissue wherein the cooking surface and tissue layers have the same surface area and apertures extend through at least the cooking surface. The insert further includes a plastic sheet disposed below the at least one layer of tissue, wherein the plastic sheet includes a surface area disposed outside a surface area of the cooking surface and tissue layer(s). Pawloski does not disclose a first layer secured to a second layer such that a portion of the surface area of the second layer is laterally disposed outside of the surface area of the first layer, wherein the second layer includes both a cellulosic or tissue ply and a thermoplastic ply. Instead, Pawloski (in FIG. 8) discloses a first layer having a cooking surface, an absorbent layer, and a paperboard layer and a second layer comprising a packaging film. At no point does Pawloski disclose that an absorbent layer may be added to the second layer. This feature of the second layer allows absorption of liquids that flow over the surface area of the first layer onto the second layer. Pawloski does not provide such an advantage.

Tanizaki et al. discloses a polypropylene composition including a resin comprising metallocene polypropylene including a copolymer of propylene and ethylene. The resin also optionally may comprise additives including, but not limited to, talc, calcium, magnesium, and antioxidants. Tanizaki only discloses compositions for films.

Phillips discloses a grease and moisture absorbing insert for microwave cooking including a first layer with a plurality of holes, a second absorbent layer, and a third bottom layer. All three layers are disclosed to be of the same size and shape.

Komatsu et al. discloses a package containing an agent for retaining the quality of food kept therein. The package comprises an outer layer of a substantially gas-impermeable material, a first seal layer formed on an inner side of the outer layer, an inner layer formed on an inner side of the first seal layer, and a gas-permeable second seal layer formed on an inner side of the inner layer. Peripheral portions of the second seal layer are adhered to one another to form a sealed package.

Because the prior art does not disclose each of the elements recited by the claims at issue, it follows that such claims are not anticipated thereby.

Further, because none of the prior art discloses or suggests that it would be desirable or even possible to provide a processing substrate as specified by the claims at issue, it is evident that the claims are not obvious thereover. The prior art must disclose at least a suggestion of an incentive for the claimed combination of elements in order for a *prima facie* case of obviousness to be established. See *In re Sernaker*, 217 U.S.P.Q. 1 (Fed. Cir. 1983) and *Ex Parte Clapp*, 227 U.S.P.Q. 972, 973 (Bd. Pat. App. 1985). Accordingly, the obviousness rejections should be withdrawn.

For the foregoing reasons, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections of the claims at issue and allowance thereof are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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